

W. A. Woodhouse

THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

Number 12] MARTINSBURGH, FEBRUARY 1, 1816. [Volume 1.

THE
DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER,
AN AUTHENTIC AND INTERESTING
NARRATIVE,
BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND.

[Concluded from page 84]

PART V.

WHO can conceive or estimate the nature of that change which the soul of a believer must experience at the moment when, quitting its tabernacle of clay, it suddenly enters into the presence of God? If, even while "we see through a glass darkly," the views of divine love and wisdom are so delightful to the eye of faith, what must be the glorious vision of God, when seen face to face? If it be so valued a privilege here on earth to enjoy the communion of saints, and to take sweet counsel together with our fellow travellers towards the heavenly kingdom; what shall we see and know when we finally "come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men, made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant?"

If, during the sighs and tears of a mortal pilgrimage, the consolations of the Spirit are so precious, and the hope full of immortality is so animating to the soul, what heart can conceive, or what tongue utter its superior joys, when arrived at that state, where sighing and sorrow flee away, and the tears shall be wiped from every eye?

Such ideas were powerfully associated together in my imagination, as I travelled onward to the house, where, in solemn preparation for the grave, lay the remains of the Dairyman's Daughter.

She had breathed her last shortly after my visit, as related in the former account. Permission was obtained, as before in the case of her sister, that I should perform the funeral service. Many pleasing yet melancholy thoughts were connected with the fulfilment of this task. I retraced the numerous and important conversations which I had held with her. But these could now no longer be held on earth. I reflected on the interesting and improving nature of Christian friendships, whether formed in palaces or in cottages; and felt thankful that I had so long enjoyed that privilege with the subject of this memorial. I then indulged a selfish sigh, for a moment, on thinking that I could no longer hear the great truths of Christianity uttered by one, who had drank so deep of the waters of the river of life. But the rising murmur was checked by the animating thought; "She is gone to eternal rest—could I wish her back again in this vale of tears?"

At that moment the first sound of a tolling bell struck my ear. It proceeded from a village church in the valley directly beneath the ridge of a high hill, over which I had taken my way.—It was poor Elizabeth's funeral knell.

It was a solemn sound; and in ascending upwards to the elevated spot over which I rode, it acquired a peculiar character and tone. Tolling at slow and regulated intervals (as was

customary for a considerable time previous to the hour of burial) it seemed to proclaim at once the blessedness of the dead, who die in the Lord, and the necessity of the living pondering these things, and laying them to heart. It seemed to say, "Hear my warning voice, thou son of man. There is but a step between thee and death. Arise, prepare thine house, for thou shalt die, and not live."

The scenery was in unison with that tranquil frame of mind which is most suitable for holy meditation. A rich and fruitful valley lay immediately beneath; it was adorned with corn-fields and pastures, through which a small river winded in a variety of directions, and many herds grazed upon its banks. A fine range of opposite hills, covered with grazing flocks, terminated with a bold sweep into the ocean, whose blue waves appeared at a distance beyond. Several villages, hamlets, and churches, were scattered in the valley. The noble mansions of the rich, and the lowly cottages of the poor, added their respective features to the landscape. The air was mild, and the declining sun occasioned a beautiful interchange of light and shade upon the sides of the hills. In the midst of this scene, the chief sound that arrested attention, was the bell tolling for the funeral of the Dairyman's Daughter.

Do any of my readers inquire why I describe so minutely the circumstances of prospect scenery which may be connected with the incidents I relate? My reply is, that the God of redemption is the God of creation likewise; and that we are taught in every part of the Word of God to unite the admiration of the beauties and wonders of nature to every other motive for devotion. When David considered the heavens, the work of God's fingers, the moon and the stars, which he has ordained, he was thereby led to the deepest humiliation of heart before his Maker. And

when he viewed the sheep and the oxen, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, he was constrained to cry out, "O Lord, our Lord! how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

I am the Poor Man's Friend, and wish more especially that every poor labouring man should know how to connect the goodness of God in creation and providence with the unsearchable riches of his grace in the salvation of a sinner. And where can he learn this lesson more instructively than in looking around the fields where his labour is appointed, and there tracing the handy work of God in all that he beholds? Such meditations have often afforded me both profit and pleasure, and I wish my readers to share them with me.

The Dairyman's cottage was rather more than a mile distant from the church. A lane, quite overshadowed with trees and high hedges, led from the foot of the hill to his dwelling.—It was impossible at that time to overlook the suitable gloom of such an approach to the house of mourning.

I found, on entering the house, that several Christian friends, from different parts of the neighbourhood, had assembled together, to show their last tribute of esteem and regard to the memory of the Dairyman's Daughter. Several of them had first become acquainted with her during the latter stage of her illness; some few had maintained an affectionate intercourse with her for a longer period. But all seemed anxious to manifest their respect for one who was endeared to them by such striking features of true Christianity.

I was requested to go into the chamber where the relatives and a few other friends were gone to take a last look at the remains of Elizabeth.

It is not easy to describe the sensation which the mind experiences on the first sight of a dead countenance, which, when living, was loved and

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esteemed for the sake of that soul which used to give it animation. A deep and awful view of the separation that has taken place between the soul and body of the deceased, since we last beheld them, occupies the feelings; our friend seems to be both near, and yet far off. The most interesting and valuable part is fled away; what remains is but the earthly perishing habitation no longer occupied by its tenant. Yet the features present the accustomed association of friendly intercourse. For one moment, we could think them asleep. The next reminds us that the blood circulates no more; the eye has lost its power of seeing, the ear of hearing, the heart of throbbing, and the limbs of moving. Quickly a thought of glory breaks in upon the mind, and we imagine the dear departed soul to be arrived at its long wished-for rest. It is surrounded by cherubim and seraphim, and sings the song of Moses and the Lamb on mount Zion. Amid the solemn stillness of the chamber of death, imagination hears heavenly hymns chanted by the spirits of just men made perfect. In another moment, the livid lips and sunken eye of the clay cold corpse recall our thoughts to earth, and to ourselves again. And while we think of mortality, sin, death, and the grave, we feel the prayer rise in our bosom, "O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

If there be a moment when Christ and salvation, death, judgment, heaven, and hell, appear more than ever to be momentous subjects of meditation, it is that which brings us to the side of a coffin containing the body of a departed believer.

Elizabeth's features were altered, but much of her likeness remained. Her father and mother sat at the head, her brother at the foot of the coffin. The father silently and alternately looked upon his dead child,

and then lifted up his eyes to heaven. A struggle for resignation to the will of God was manifest in his countenance; the tears rolling down his aged cheeks, at the same time declared his grief and affection. The poor mother cried and sobbed aloud, and appeared to be much overcome by the shock of separation from a daughter so justly dear to her. The weakness and infirmity of old age added a character to her sorrow, which called for much tenderness of compassion.

A remarkably decent looking woman, who had the management of the few simple though solemn ceremonies which the case required, advanced towards me, saying,

'Sir, this is rather a sight of joy than of sorrow. Our dear friend Elizabeth finds it to be so. I have no doubt. She is beyond *all* sorrow.—Do you not think she is, Sir?' 7

'After what I have known and seen, and heard,' I replied, 'I feel the fullest assurance that while her body remains here, her soul is with her Saviour in Paradise. She loved him *here*, and *there* she enjoys the pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore.'

'Mercy, mercy upon a poor old creature, almost broken down with age and grief, what shall I do?—Betsy's gone! My daughter's dead! Oh! my child, I shall never see thee more! God be merciful to me a sinner!' sobbed out the poor mother.

'That last prayer, my dear good woman,' said I, 'will bring you together again. It is a cry that has brought thousands to glory. It brought your daughter thither and I hope it will bring you thither likewise. He will in no wise cast out any that come to him.'

'My dear,' said the Dairyman, breaking the long silence he had maintained, 'let us trust God with our child, and let us trust him with our own selves. The Lord gave, and

the Lord has taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord ! We are old, and can have but a little farther to travel in our journey, and then' — He could say no more.

The soldier mentioned in my last paper, reached a Bible into my hand, and said, ' Perhaps, Sir, you would not object to reading a chapter before we go to the church ?'

I did so ; it was the fourteenth of the book of Job. A sweet tranquility prevailed, while I read it. Each minute that was spent in this funeral chamber, seemed to be valuable. I made a few observations on the chapter, and connected them with the case of our departed sister.

' I am but a poor soldier,' said our military friend, ' and have nothing of this world's goods beyond my daily subsistence ; but I would not exchange my hope of salvation in the next world, for all that this world could bestow without it. What is wealth without grace ? Blessed be God, as I march about from one quarters to another, I still find the Lord where-ever I go, and thanks be to his holy name, he is here to day in the midst of this company of the living and the dead. I feel that it is good to be here.'

Some other persons present began to take a part in the conversation, in the course of which the life and experience of the Dairyman's Daughter were brought forward in a very interesting manner ; each friend had something to relate in testimony of her gracious disposition. One distant relative, a young woman under twenty, who had hitherto been a very light and trifling character, appeared to be remarkably impressed by the conversation of that day ; and I have since had ground to believe that divine grace then began to influence her in the choice of that better part which shall not be taken from her.

What a contrast does such a scene

as this exhibit, when compared with the dull, formal, unedifying, and often indecent manner in which funeral parties assemble in the house of death.

As we conversed, the parents seemed to revive. Our subject of discourse was delightful to their hearts. Their child seemed to be alive again, while we talked of her. — Tearful smiles often brightened their countenances, as they heard the voice of friendship uttering their daughter's praises, or rather the praises of him who had made her a vessel of mercy, and an instrument of so much spiritual good to her family.

The time for departure to the church was now at hand.

I went to take my last look at the deceased.

There was much written on her countenance. She had evidently departed with a smile. It still remained, and spoke the tranquility of her departing soul. According to the custom of the place, she was decorated with leaves and flowers in the coffin. She seemed as a bride gone forth to meet the bridegroom. These, indeed, were fading flowers, but they reminded me of that Paradise, whose flowers are immortal, and where her never-dying soul is at rest.

I remembered the last words which I had heard her speak, and was instantly struck with the happy thought that ' death was indeed swallowed up in victory.'

As I slowly retired, I said inwardly, " Peace, my honored sister, be to *thy* memory, and to *my* soul, till we meet in a better world !"

In a little time the procession formed ; it was rendered the more interesting by the consideration of so many that followed the coffin, being persons of truly serious and spiritual characters. The distance was rather more than a mile. I resolved to con-

tinge with and go before them, as they moved slowly onwards.

Immediately after the body came the venerable father and mother,* bending with age, and weeping through much affection of heart—Their appearance was calculated to excite every emotion of pity, love, and esteem. The other relatives followed them, and the several attendant friends took their places behind.

After we had advanced about a hundred yards, my meditation was unexpectedly and most agreeably interrupted by the friends who followed the family beginning to sing a funeral psalm. Nothing could be more sweet or solemn. The well-known effect of the open air in softening and blending the sounds of music, was here peculiarly felt. The road through which we passed was beautiful and romantic. It lay at the foot of a hill, which occasionally re-echoed the voices of the singers, and seemed to give faint replies to the sounds of the mourners. The funeral knell was distinctly heard from the church tower, and greatly increased the effect which this simple and becoming service produced.

We went by several cottages; a respectful attention was universally observed as we passed; and the countenances of many proclaimed their regard for the departed young woman. The singing was regularly continued, with occasional intervals of about five minutes, during the whole progress.

* The mother died about half a year after her daughter; and I have good reason to believe, that God was merciful to her, and took her to himself. May every converted child thus labour and pray for the salvation of their unconverted parents.

The father continued after her, and adorned his old age with a walk and conversation becoming the Gospel. Whether he yet lives, I know not, but probably before this the daughter and both her parents are met together in "the land of pure delights, where saints immortal reign."

I cannot describe the state of my own mind as peculiarly connected with this solemn singing. I never witnessed a similar instance before or since. I was reminded of elder times and ancient piety. I wished the practice more frequent. It seems well calculated to excite and cherish devotion and religious affection.

Music, when judiciously brought into the service of religion, is one of the most delightful, and not least efficacious means of grace. I pretend not too minutely to conjecture as to the actual nature of those pleasures which, after the resurrection, the reunited body and soul will enjoy in heaven: but I can hardly persuade myself that melody and harmony will be wanting, when even the sense of hearing shall itself be glorified.

We at length arrived at the church. The service was heard with deep and affectionate attention. When we came to the grave, the hymn which Elizabeth had selected was sung. All was devout, simple, decent, animating. We committed our dear friend's body to the grave, in full hope of a joyful resurrection from the dead.

Thus was the vail of separation drawn for a season. She is departed, and no more seen. But she *will* be seen at the right hand of her Redeemer at the last day; and will again appear to his glory, a miracle of grace and monument of mercy.

My reader, rich or poor, shall you and I appear there likewise? Are we "clothed with humility," and arrayed in the wedding garment of a Redeemer's righteousness? Are we turned from idols to serve the living God? Are we sensible of our own emptiness, flying to a Saviour's fullness to obtain grace and strength? Do we live in him, and on him, and by him, and with him? Is he our all in all? Are we "lost, and found?" "dead, and alive again?"

My poor reader, the Dairyman's Daughter was a poor girl, and the

child of a poor man. Herein thou resemblest her: but dost thou resemble her, as she resembled Christ? Art thou made rich, by faith? Hast thou a crown laid up for thee? Is thine heart set upon heavenly riches? If not, read this story once more, and then pray earnestly for like precious faith. If, through grace, thou dost love and serve the Redeemer that saved the Dairyman's Daughter, grace, peace, and mercy be with thee. The lines are fallen unto thee in pleasant places: thou hast a goodly heritage. Press forward in duty, and wait upon the Lord, possessing thy soul in holy patience. Thou hast just been with me to the grave of a departed believer. Now go thy way, till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

To the editor of the Christian Observer.

The following notes contain the substance of a sermon delivered by the late Mr. Patrick, March 16th, 1800, at the chapel in Dartmouth Row, Blackheath. They were taken with a view solely to the writer's private satisfaction, but if you think them deserving of a place in your valuable miscellany, they may probably prove of service to some of your readers,

Yours,

A CONSTANT READER.

LUKE, 11th chap. 24—26,

WHEN the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return to my house from whence I came out. And when he cometh he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he and

taketh to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first.——The immediate occasion of this parable was the blasphemy and perverse opposition of the Jews; and it contained a terrible warning to them, that if the present grace and special invitation of God failed of its due effect, their last state would be indeed worse than their first. Many were, without doubt, in part affected and awakened by our Saviour's miracles and preaching, as they had before been, by the appearance and the call of the Baptist to prepare for the kingdom of God: in both cases if they brought not fruits meet for repentance, they were nigh to the awful sentence of being cut down as withered trees to be cast in the fire.—I shall beg leave to accommodate the subject, however, to our present edification, and without presuming to assert that my explication of what is meant by the unclean spirit, is the proper and primary sense of the words, I shall now consider it as denoting evil principles and habits; and that they are thus personified, the more strongly to impress upon our minds their power and existence.—Some awakening providence or extraordinary call may for a time so far overpower these that they may be said to have gone out of a man; this is a crisis that demands peculiar fear, diligence and prayer. For now the man walketh through dry places, his former amusements and enjoyments are embittered and suspended. Penitence and concern, sorrow for the past and concern for the future occupy his mind, conscience urges to duty but the path is rugged. As a man accustomed to ease whose feet feel every roughness and are wounded by every stone, he still goes forward though slowly; he had armed himself with confident resolves, but these resolves owed their strength to the

absence of temptation and the force of present impression. We naturally think we shall continue to feel in future as we feel at present. We do not consider that man is a complex being; he not only contemplates an object by means of his interest, but his hopes and fear; his joys and sorrows produce impressions on his bodily frame—this latter is continually undergoing alterations, which react upon the mind; the animal spirits are in a state of fluctuation, and as the returning wave effaces the traces formed by the preceding one in the sand, so the feelings of to day are displaced by the feelings of the morrow. Our penitent was not prepared for this natural change; he imagined his first fervours would be abiding and therefore did not guard against the return of solicitations of evil habits and appetites. Added to the privations of animal pleasures, and the new and uneasy restraints of self denial; probably his former companions assail him with contempt or scurrility; he seeketh and finding none, the thought of his former state obtrude themselves on his mind. As a man travelling in a wilderness, in a cold night and dreary road, remembers the ease and enjoyments of his home, which appear from the contrast more attractive than ever—so he regrets the sensual delights he has quitted: regret rekindles desire; desire prompts him to return to them, but conscience interposes; he stops, he pauses—His resolutions, at length, give way. He fondly thinks some other season may be favourable to his progress; he says, “he will return to his house from whence he came,” his former haunts of ease and indulgence. Not that he means to abide there; he knows it must be again quitted if he means to save his soul, but only now to seek a temporary refreshment, which his present uneasiness seems to require. After many reasonings, at length he determines;

he measures back his pace with quickened pace to earth; and now his former abode appears to his view more than ever attractive and desirable. “Swept and garnished.” As the traveller drenched with rain and fatigued with the toil of his journey, longs for the ease and comforts of his own fireside, as he rejoices in his return to those indulgences from which fear and conscience had driven him. But is the enjoyment peaceful? Ah no! Guilt rankles in his soul; the dread of what is hereafter to come embitters the present; thorns lie beneath the roses on which he would repose. What can he do, shall he think again of resuming a task so difficult, a pilgrimage so rugged?—Attempt again to lead a religious life? Oh no! He shrin’ s from the thought. He rather seeks the art of stupifying conscience and hardening the heart. Sensual delight, the dance, the song, festivity and wine, the opiates of infidelity, the hope, the wish, that gladly listens to the lie, there are no judgments, no terrors to come. Thus he taketh to himself seven other spirits (Seducers) more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there. Surely, “the last state of this man is worse than the first!” Oh! beware ye who feel convictions, who catch a glimpse of your danger—beware how ye trifle with them! and beware how ye rest with them, for the latter involves the former. Consider them as monitors, to flee to the Saviour, that you may obtain that grace by which the heart is established, and soon will your steps be established too. Then ye will tread the narrow way and find it the way of life: then ye will progressively prove that wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, though she exercise her probationer with self denial and with difficulties—that he may be humbled and proved, and capable of receiving good in the latter end.

From the Christian Observer.

VERSION OF PSALM XV.

Who, blest with God's eternal smile,
Shall rest on Sion's holy hill ;
Or, lost to earthly cares awhile,
In holy tents perform his will ?

E'en he whose heart and life are free
From blind corruption's sinful stain;
Whose words and actions well agree ;
Whose promise ne'er is pledg'd in
vain !

That man whose generous soul dis-
dains
The crooked paths of dark deceit :
O'er whom bright truth, triumphant,
reigns ;
Whose breast is honour's chosen
seat.

Slander, before his open face,
Abash'd and cowering, far retires ;
Whilst love, and every heavenly grace,
Inspire him with their purest fires.

No sinful gains increase his store :
The oath he sware is sacred still ;
Nor interest, nor ambition's power,
Can tempt him to forsake thy will.

The man who thus thy law performs,
O mighty God ! shall never fall ;
Secure, amidst surrounding storms ;
His firm support—the Lord of all !

HYMN.

4th Sunday in Advent—John 1.

The Lord shall come ! the earth shall
quake,
The hills their fixed seat forsake ;
And, withering from the vault of
night,
The stars shall pale their feeble
light.

The Lord shall come ! but not the
same
As once in lowly guise he came ;
A silent lamb before his foes,
A weary man, and full of woes.

The Lord shall come ! a dreadful
form,
With rainbow wreath, and robes of
storm ;
On cherub wings, and wings of wind ;
Anointed Judge of human kind.

“ Can this be he, who went to stray,
“ A pilgrim on the world's high-
way ;

“ Opprest by power, and mock'd by
pride ;

“ O God ! is this the crucified ? ”

Go, tyrants, to the rocks complain,
And seek the mountain's shade in
vain !

But Faith, ascending from the tomb,
Shall shouting sing, “ the Lord is
come ! ”

INNOCENTS' DAY.

Oh weep not o'er thy children's tomb,
Oh Rachel, weep not so !
The bud is cropt by martyrdom,
The flower in Heaven shall blow !

Firstlings of faith ! the murderer's knife
Has miss'd its deadly aim ;
The God for whom they gave their life,
For them to suffer came.

Tho' evil were their days and few,
Baptiz'd in blood and pain,
He knows them whom they never knew,
And they shall live again.

Then weep not o'er thy children's tomb,
Oh Rachel, weep not so !
The bud is cropt by martyrdom,
The flower in Heaven shall blow !

PRINTED BY
JOHN ALBURTIS,
Martinsburgh, Virginia.